

Smart savers

The Shell FuelSave Challenge is all about spreading the word on fuel-saving and providing the young with a holistic and integrated experience of the working world, writes **Aneeta Sundararaj**

READ the following fuel tips aloud: Switch off the engine when your car is idle; service your car regularly; remove excess baggage from the boot. Chances are you're ready to read something else.

Now, imagine getting a group of young adults to read 15 fuel-saving tips, understand them, practice what they've learnt and, thereafter, share it with their peers.

Five groups of young adults recently undertook this challenge and used innovative techniques of persuasion. One group won RM15,000.

Shell Malaysia, in collaboration with Media Prima, organised a competition called Shell FuelSave College Competition which was open to students from various private colleges that offered courses in media and mass communication. In addition to spreading the word about saving fuel, the competition aimed to provide young adults with a holistic and integrated experience of the working world.

Students were asked to plan and execute a communications campaign to promote fuel efficiency through a series of educational online mini-games. It is part of Shell's global campaign — Shell Target One Million — to educate and promote smart energy use to one million motorists.

Azman Ismail, managing director of Shell Malaysia Trading and Shell Timur says: "Each team consisted of between four and 10 members. They had to come up with a marketing plan and were given a budget of RM3,000 to execute this plan. They had to tell us how they planned to use the money."

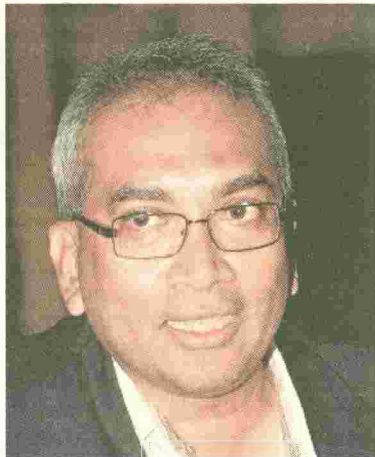
Bearing in mind that this was an "out-of-classroom" activity and those who participated were volunteers, he was delighted with the overwhelming response Shell Malaysia received when the competition was announced. He remains impressed with the ideas and innovative ways in which the students executed their plans.

"Remember," he says, "these



The winning team from **Tunku Abdul Rahman College**.

PICTURE BY NIK ROSLI ISHAK



Azman Ismail believes all the participants are winners.

young adults are going to graduate very soon. In a matter of months, some of them will become journalists or join advertising agencies. They are going to contribute to the communications industry."

"What we did was to create the School of Shell," says Liew Shu En, 21, a member of the winning team from Tunku Abdul Rahman College. Liew, who is pursuing an Advanced Diploma in Mass Communication, explained that School of Shell offered a new course called TAR College Shell Fuel Save 95 (TARC SFS 0095). All students were invited to enrol in this course which ran from Oct 22-30. The aim was to get as many students as possible to master the 15 fuel-saving tips (see side bar). They also had a final exam. Those who passed would "graduate" from the School of Shell. Everyone who enrolled in the course stood a chance to win preloaded Touch N Go cards.

"They had an actual graduation, complete with certificate and all," adds Lim Siz Siz, 34, the programme supervisor. "The objective was to

educate the others and also get them to link to the online game."

To spread the word about the course, the students set up a Facebook page and uploaded several one-minute videos illustrating each of the 15 tips. (<http://www.facebook.com/TARCSFS0095>). Technology and, in particular, Facebook, was the common medium of communication used by the participants to communicate with their peers.

Mohd Hellis Mohd Som, a lecturer at UCSI, says that his team used Skype to get students from other campuses to participate in their campaign, Shell's Happy Yelloween. "It was the holiday season and there were hardly any students on campus. So, we used Skype to connect with students from our other campuses. We told them that participation in the campaign would also count as points for extracurricular activities."

The runners up of the competition, the group from Taylor's University, certainly demonstrated innovative marketing techniques — one of the winners from their campaign received a month's worth of free reserved parking in Taylor's Commercial block. No doubt, all of them seem to have had enormous fun and nothing says this more than the hilarious video they uploaded on to YouTube called 'Oppa Fuel-Save Style' (www.youtube.com/watch?v=...KYFkpbgTk).

"That's not all they did," adds their lecturer, Karmini Narayanan, 42, programme director, School of Communication. "They told their friends that if they got 1,000 students to sign up, the lecturers would do a flash mob style of this parody of Psy's song." And, did they? "Yes, we had to," she adds with a smirk.

Fun aside, there was learning in

this exercise as well. Azmir Husni Mohd Nor, 32, Marketing and Communication lecturer at HELP University College says, "There is educational value in this programme. A hands-on activity. Here's an example. I can lecture them about setting up a marketing plan and show them how to do it. But, with this, they had to actually do it and present it to Shell. Then, they had to execute the plan. That kind of experience is invaluable."

True enough, Quinn K. Amaloro, 20, from UCSI backs this up by saying: "The most important thing I learnt is budget allocation. We should never go beyond the budget as it can jeopardise an event. If we're over-budget, then we should cut down on things that are not directly related to the event. Also, everything must be properly planned from the start. It's no point having everyone doing the same thing."

Maintaining a positive attitude, she says: "At least now I know about running an event. I know it's not just about the event. There's the management and administration work before and after the event. We may not have won, but we had nothing to lose. In fact, we have gained so much experience. And we know we have room for improvement."

No doubt, the students came up with some great ideas. Their teamwork, time-management skills and ability to think on their feet helped to bring these ideas to life. "Regardless of who the champion was, to me, all the participants are already winners for the passion, energy and commitment they have shown," says Azman Ismail. "We at Shell truly hope this has given them an insight into the working world and a rich experience as they forge ahead in life."

CHANGE YOUR DRIVING HABITS AND SAVE FUEL

SHELL Malaysia has a list of 15 tips that show you how to drive efficiently and save fuel.

1. Use a fuel economy formula to help reduce consumption and fuel costs.
2. Keep your boot and back seat clear of unnecessary items such as golf clubs to reduce the weight that your vehicle has to carry.
3. Always use the recommended grade of motor oil to help the engine operate efficiently.
4. Tune and service your engine regularly. For example, replacing a clogged air filter can improve fuel economy and will help protect your engine.
5. Maintain the right air pressure for tyres so they remain safer and last longer.
6. Turn the engine off when in a queue or waiting for someone.
7. Plan trips carefully and avoid the rush hour to avoid being stuck in traffic.
8. The higher the gear you drive in, the lower your engine speed.
9. Think ahead when you're driving. For example, slow down early to let traffic lights change, rather than stopping completely, or speed up a little before you reach the foot of a hill. Leave a sensible distance between yourself and the car ahead to give you ample time to brake evenly.
10. Drive in a smooth manner and avoid accelerating or braking too hard.
11. Using cruise control on major highways helps you to maintain a constant speed.
12. The faster you go the more wind resistance you'll encounter and the more fuel your vehicle will consume to maintain your speed.
13. Air conditioning adds a load on the engine and fuel is needed to make it work. Limit the use of the air conditioning to particularly hot days and use the fan instead.
14. Wind blowing through an open window will slow you down. This may cause you to accelerate to maintain your speed, thereby, using more fuel.
15. Remove your roof rack if you're not using it. It affects the aerodynamics of your car by creating drag, which reduces fuel economy.